

ADRIANNE KALFOPOULOU

## Our Bodies/Ourselves

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Want to leave the car right there  
in the midst of traffic, blinkers flashing  
like the emotional ambulance it's become,  
leave the kids in the back seat  
arguing and my daughter yelling  
that I 'CANNOT' ground her, that  
she's worked too 'HARD' all week  
when I grab her arm, squeezing as she  
screams 'that HURTS!' Her lipstick  
flies against the dashboard, the cap spins  
off, hits the steering wheel, I jerk  
to a stop for the damn photo shoot  
I agreed to drive her to with her friends.  
She jumps out, slams the door  
so the already loose window  
sounds like it's finally shattered,  
her friends have hushed, piling out silently.  
The woman doing the photo shoot  
calls the five kids over to the metro entrance  
to take their positions. 'Look like  
you're about to do a gig. Remember  
you're all supposed to be  
in a youth band.' She's clipped  
and clueless, clapping her hands  
as if they're elementary kids instead of  
ninth graders on a Friday evening  
itching to get the shoot over with, asking  
more than once if she knows when  
they will get their free books.  
I thought the group of them pictured  
in an English-as-a-foreign-language book  
would be good to have, their ninth grade faces  
frozen in time. The woman doing the shoot

asks Jess to change her Bob Marley shirt  
 for something pink, wants my daughter to  
 take off the peace sign around her neck.  
 I almost say Bob Marley and peace signs  
 happen to be in, but this woman's not even sure  
 she'll offer them free books though  
 I insist the kids expect them  
 with their checks. It's on the way home  
 my daughter loses it in the car  
 when I tell her to stop using so many  
 four letter words. She yells that  
 I'm 'a frigging HYPOCRITE'  
 when Panos in the backseat  
 worried that she'll finally be grounded  
 pleads 'stop yelling.' 'I'M NOT  
 YELLING,' she screams, coasting  
 down a slope of her own, invisible to me,  
 picking up speed until she swerves, missing  
 a clean drop, her snowboard spitting ice,  
 her skin stinging cold. 'STOP'  
 I'm shouting now, but she's too fast,  
 too drugged with newfound power.  
 'You CAN'T GROUND ME' she repeats,  
 'I can live ANYWHERE,' the clear drop  
 no longer a threat, she's going  
 faster than she's ever gone,  
 tensing her body, the snowboard all  
 she clings to, taking her past trees, past  
 the cautious skiers, past all I can't see  
 when I call her father on the cell  
 to say she might turn up at his place.  
 'It's a crisis,' I'm saying, my head  
 in as many pieces as the window  
 inside its metal sleeve. He wants to know  
 is she or isn't she going to come over.  
 'It's a *crisis*!' I repeat the way she hurtled  
 the words like ammunition.